

Dear Chairman Powell and all Commissioners,

As an tax paying American citizen who wants (and needs) to be informed about the political and electoral issues that affect my life and my family's lives, I am extremely frustrated and upset by the low levels of informative television programming for American citizens.

Our local public affairs programming is virtually non-existent--seeming to be less than one half of 1% of all other local programming. Research shows that more than half of the news broadcasts prior to the 2002 elections did not include a single campaign story. Our country and democracy is put at risk when our citizens aren't informed of the basic facts about the candidates or the issues. This was the case in the 2000 elections, and it appears to be the case with the current 2004 elections.

While broadcasters are given free use of the airways, and gain revenue from campaign ads, they continue to fail in their obligation to serve the public interest. It is past time for the FCC to define some meaningful public interest requirements that include issues regarding the programming of local civic and electoral affairs. At the very least, broadcasters should be required to air three hours of programming on local civic & electoral issues every week, and a additional minimum of two hours should be devoted to substantive election coverage, all of this beginning at least six weeks prior to Election Day.

A true, functioning democracy must demand that all its citizens are given easy access to the wide diversity of voices and opinions on all the issues and choices confronting them.

Please take action to assist our citizens in receiving this information through the broadcasting networks.

Sincerely,
Leilani Horton

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